News from Cam Gordon Council Member, Second Ward March/April 2013

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/ward2 http://secondward.blogspot.com

Funding for Transit, Walking and Biking. A "Transit for a Stronger Economy" bill I strongly support is working its way through the Legislature that will, if passed, increase sales taxes by three quarters of a cent in the metro area to expand investment in transit. It will increase bus service by 4%, ensure that we can build 3 new Light Rail lines, put Bus Rapid Transit on 4 highway corridors, and help create 12 higheramenity "Enhanced Bus" routes. It will also include \$50 million per year for metro-area cities and counties to address local needs, including accessibility enhancements, safer sidewalks, and bicycle routes. The bill is supported by over 50 organizations, including Transit for Livable Communities and the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee, A sales tax is the way that nearly all US regions fund transit – and it's one of the ways that other regions have made significantly more progress on transit than the Twin Cities region has. I urge you to contact your State Legislators and encourage them to support this incredible opportunity to provide stable, adequate funding for transit in Minneapolis. You can take action here: http://www.mntransit.org/takeaction.asp?aaid=6578.

Roundtable Discussion April 10: Minneapolis Energy Options. Please join me for a roundtable discussion about our energy future with members the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign, on Wednesday, April 10th, at 7:00pm at Matthews Center, 2313 28th Ave S. As you may have heard, the City's franchise agreements with Xcel Energy and Centerpoint Energy will expire in 2014. This represents a rare opportunity to push for cleaner, more reliable, more affordable and more local energy. To this end, I support putting a question on the ballot for this fall's election that will authorize the City to form a municipal power utility, if we can prove that a municipal utility would bring us clean, affordable, reliable and more local energy. Without voter approval to make a public owned utility an option, we will have little or (in the case of the electric company) no bargaining power when we begin discussions about the franchise agreements.

City Trees Available. The City of Minneapolis is offering 1,000 trees this spring for only \$25 each. The trees are approximately four to eight feet tall (depending on the species) with one-inch trunks. Any Minneapolis property can order a tree to plant on private Minneapolis property this spring. Remaining varieties include Kentucky coffeetree, northern hackberry, Princeton elm, and Techny arborvitae. Ordering began March 25 at www.treetrust.org or 952-767-3886.

Street Sweeping. On April 16 city crews will start cleaning all city streets and alleys. From April 9 through May 3, sweepers will take care of all 1,000 miles of city streets and parkways. In addition to the "No Parking" signs that will be posted the day before sweepers come through, the City will make about 3,500 automated phone calls each evening to let residents know their street will be swept the next day. Folks can also use the City's Web site to find out when the sweepers are coming go to www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping and click on "street sweeping schedule lookup," to find out which week a street is scheduled to be swept. The weekend before that week, they can revisit the Web site to find out which day of the week the street is scheduled to be swept. You can also view streetsweeping videos at www.YouTube.com/cityofminneapolis.

Self-Managed Special Service Districts. The Council has adopted a policy on creating new Self-Managed Special Service Districts in Minneapolis. This will allow business districts to form special service districts that they manage and control, if they want. My office worked to ensure that this policy works as well as possible for existing neighborhood business associations that may want to manage special service districts. The Council voted to create two governance models. One allows a Downtown Improvement District-style "Management Entity" that decides on budgets, services to be provided, and assessment models, while also providing services. The other model would create a new City Advisory Board for the district that decides on budgets, services, and assessment models, and allow an existing nonprofit to provide the services and day-to-day management. I offered a successful amendment to clarify that there could be some overlap between the Advisory Board and the Service Provider, after

hearing concerns from West Bank stakeholders. This work was done very quickly by a group of City staff, and I want to thank them individually: Ben Hecker, Andy Carlson, Mike Kennedy and their consultant Michael McLaughlin. I also want to thank the West Bank Business Association, Lake Street Council, Cedar Riverside Partnership and Carol Becker, among other stakeholders, for participating in the public process to develop this policy.

Funding for Municipal Power Study. In April I expect the Regulatory Energy and Environment Committee will consider a proposal to dedicate significant funds (up to \$250,000) to study the issues related to our utility franchise and forming a municipal energy utility in Minneapolis. The funding will come from the existing City Coordinator budget and I believe will be an important next step to getting the information we need to make future decisions about energy options in Minneapolis.

Bicyclist Killed at Lake and Cedar. This past weekend, a young woman was hit and killed by a hit-and run driver while on her bicycle at the intersection of Lake Street and Cedar Ave S. The woman, Elyse Mary Stern, was a member of the Seward Café community and connected to Bedlam Theater, Barebones, and In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theater. The driver appeared to be drunk, and I expect that he will be charged.

Lucy Gerold Honored. Second Ward and Seward neighborhood resident Lucy Gerold was honored in March for her 34 years of outstanding service to the residents of Minneapolis on the Minneapolis Police Department. Lucy Gerold began her career with the City in 1978 by being appointed by the Governor's Commission on Crime to lead the Southside CCP/SAFE pilot program as a Crime Prevention Specialist. Over the next 19 years she rose through the ranks to become the Director of the Community Services Bureau; and in 1997, enrolled in, and successfully completed, the Minneapolis Police Academy. From 2002 to 2012, she served in various positions in the Police Department including as the Fifth Precinct Police Inspector, Deputy Chief, the Commander of the Third Precinct and finally the Commander of the Leadership and Organization Development Division. To honor her, the City Council presented her with a certificate of special commendation that noted (among other things) that Lucy has been "an outstanding and inspirational leader whose high standards of ethics, accountability and principles have raised the bar and bettered the community and Minneapolis Police Department as a whole." As she leaves the department I hope you will join me in wishing her the best and thanking her for her superior leadership, her commitment to the highest principles of public service, and all the time and energy she gave to make our city and our community a safer and better place.

Blood/Plasma Collection Facilities. My proposal to allow blood and plasma donation and collection will go to the full Planning Commission on Monday, April 8 for a review and public hearing. Then it will go to Zoning and Planning Council Committee on May 2 and then most likely to the full Council for final consideration on May 10. The proposed change would allow these facilities in certain office/ institutionally zoned areas (OR3), in addition to these currently being allowed downtown (B4C) and in heavy commercial (C4) zones. There are approximately 26 parcels in the City with OR3 zoning mostly on or near college and hospital campuses. We will also be adding three standards that would need to met by any such collection facility: 1) Trash receptacles shall be located at the public entrance(s), and the premises, all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within one hundred (100) feet shall be inspected regularly for purposes of removing any litter found thereon; (2) The facility shall include a waiting area and departure lounge of a size large enough to accommodate all donors within the building, but not less than five hundred (500) square feet in area; and, (3) The operator shall submit a management plan for the facility and a floor plan showing the waiting area and departure lounge and number of donor beds.

Concentration of Sex Offenders. In March the Public Safety Committee was presented with detailed information about the relocation of sex offenders in the state of Minnesota. We learned that over half the registered sex offenders in the state live in Hennepin County, with the majority concentrated in the neighborhoods of Jordan and Phillips. We also learned that the financial burden that Hennepin County tax payers are required to bear by the state is disproportionate compared to where the crimes were committed and where the individuals were convicted and sentenced. In response to the report, the City Council passed a resolution authored by Council Members Samuels supporting the Hennepin County's

Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee's recommendations to oppose cost shifting to local units of government; provide incentives for sentencing counties to provide services in their own counties; support legislation and funding for job training, transitional housing, work opportunities and community-based treatment; and create a statewide coordinated plan for how to best house and assist released sex offenders and address the concentration in certain areas. The resolution also called for the state to help provide additional placement of halfway houses throughout the metropolitan region and state and require the county of commitment to bear more of the financial responsibilities for released offenders.

Beekeeping Ordinance. Council Member Goodman is bringing forward an amendment to the City's ordinance on keeping honeybees. This amendment will remove the requirement for signatures of 80% of neighbors for any hive that is one or more stories off the ground. When honeybees leave their hives, they tend to fly upwards and quickly disperse, so a hive on a rooftop is likely to have very little effect on near neighbors. As this moves forward, I will also be bringing forward an amendment that would change the City's honeybee permitting process from an annual \$50 permit to a one-time City approval with a recurring free renewal. The public hearing for this ordinance will occur at the next Public Safety, Civil Rights and Health committee on Wednesday, April 3rd, at 1:30pm in Council Chambers.

Conditions for Rental Property. There will be a public hearing on April 4th at 1:30pm on a proposed amendment to our Housing Maintenance Code that will allow the city to impose conditions or restrictions on rental dwelling licenses. We will also consider a set of operating procedures that clarify when and how the conditions would be imposed. Owners of rental properties are now required to have rental licenses for each of their properties and the City has the authority to conduct inspections and issue fines or even revoke licenses if license holders to not meet rental housing standards. If this amendment passes, when a rental property owner is in violation of a rental licensing standard/s, the City could also place specific operating conditions on the rental license. Property owners must adhere to these conditions in order for their rental license to remain in good standing. To learn more about the procedures and see examples of conditions see

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-104736.pdf. You can find the amendment here

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-105139.pdf

Flea Markets. In April the Council will consider an ordinance amendment that would allow and regulate Flea Markets in Minneapolis. There will be a public hearing **April 4**th, at around 1:30pm on a proposal to allow and license (previously prohibited) temporary markets/flea markets for the sale of arts, crafts, antiques, and/or secondhand goods by any person, partnership, corporation or association to be sold at tables, stalls, or booths at a fixed location in Minneapolis. You can find the full ordinance here http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-105719.pdf

Recreational Fires. I expect the hearing on the Recreational Fire ordinance amendment I am authoring to be held on **May 1**st at **1:30 p.m.** at the Public Safety Civil Rights and Health Committee. I am proposing that we add an additional restriction to prohibit outdoor recreational fires during times of air quality alerts when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency issues an Air Pollution Health Advisory for the Twin Cities Area.

Proposal to Increase Candidate Filing Fees. Given concerns that I have heard, the lack of unanimous support from the City Council and the fact that we are now nearing the filing time for this election, I am withdrawing support for my own filing fee increase proposal that I brought forward late this winter. The proposal went to the Charter Commission last month and they returned it to the Council after amending it to reduce the filing fees to \$250 for mayor and \$100 for Council. I support these reductions but I believe that we would be better served with a more thoughtful, and better timed, discussion before passing any increase. Still, at this point in the process, state law requires that the Charter Commission's amended proposal be given a public hearing and a vote by the Council. I expect the hearing date to occur on April 25th and the Council to vote on the matter on the 26th.

2013 Mayor State of the City Address. Mayor Rybak will be making his final state of the city address Wednesday, April 10th, at 12:00 noon at the Walker Art Center.

Public Health Week. As part of National Public Health Week, from April1-7, the Minneapolis Health Department is showcasing accomplishments in the City Hall Rotunda through the week with a special celebration and award ceremony Wednesday April 3 from 11 am – 1 pm.

Small Business Loan Programs. The City continues to provide assistance to small businesses in Minneapolis and last month the Community Development Committee was provided annual updates of our 2% loan and our interest-free Alternative Finance programs. The 2% revolving loan fund was stated in 1986. In 2012 the City facilitated (and guaranteed) 41 loans (all under \$75,001) that borrowers estimated helped create 239 jobs. The Sharia-compliant Alternative Finance Program started in 2007. In this program, the client pays an overall rate of return or fee equivalent to 2% to CPED instead of the 2% interest rate. Since the inception of the program, CPED has closed on 63 projects for a total of \$1,191,500. Of the 63 projects closed from the inception of the program, 18 have been paid in full, 39 are outstanding, 6 are in default, and another 12 are at risk. The program has created 116 jobs and retained 61. The default rate is currently 3.9%, which is slightly higher than the 2% loan program's default rate of 2.9%. You can find the full reports here: http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/cdc/WCMS1P-101746

Urban Farm Expo. The 2013 Urban Agriculture Expo will be held on **April 20**th at the Sabathani Community Center in Minneapolis. The Expo will be from 9:00am - 1:30pm, with educational seminars beginning at 9:30am. This event is for those who currently have an urban farming enterprise, are considering starting one, are supporters of urban farming, or are just curious to learn more. No preregistration is required for the event. For more see http://blog.lib.umn.edu/efans/small-farms/2013/03/2013-urban-agriculture-expo-on-april-20th.php

Food Council Priorities. For the remainder of 2013, the Minneapolis Food Council has agreed to work on several projects based on feedback provided by community members at the Food Council open house in December 2012, and suggestions from community partners and Food Council members. The projects include: 1) improving the City's Staple Food Ordinance, which sets minimum requirements for the sale of fruit and vegetables in corner and convenience store; 2)finding opportunities to assist new food cooperatives such as the Wirth Cooperative Grocery Store in North Minneapolis; 3) evaluating the Urban Ag Plan to identify ways the plan can be improved to increase food production in Minneapolis; 4) recruiting new Food Council members; and 5) increasing land and water access for gardeners and farmers in the city. Volunteers from outside the Food Council are invited to participate. If you are interested contact Jane Shey at Jane.Shey@minneapolismn.gov.

Polling Place Work Group. The City is establishing a polling place work group to assist staff in writing an assessment guide for review of polling places and participate in site visits of existing and potentially new sites under consideration for future use. People would be expected to attend visits to sites of interest to them or ones in their own neighborhoods. Two Seward polling places, Seward Square West and Seward Towers East will likely be changed and alternatives will be considered. The City is also working to find ways to better serve non-native English speakers so non-native English language speakers are being sought to assist on the work group. Anyone interested in volunteering time to this project should contact: Tim Schwarz at 612-673-3136 or tim.schwarz@minneapolismn.gov. The main work will occur in April, with all work likely completed by early May.

Seattle's Race Justice Initiative Comes to City Hall. On April 18th at 1:30pm, Glenn Harris and Julie Nelson from the City of Seattle will meet with Minneapolis City leaders to discuss Seattle's Racial Equity Assessment Toolkit that they helped design and implement. This is a model that was reviewed carefully when drafting our own Employment Equity plan and I am hopeful that this exchange will help inspire our efforts to develop our own "Minneapolis Equity Toolkit" model to assess how our policies, projects, procedures and budget decisions do nor do not promote equity, counter unintentional bias and fight against institutional racism so that we can better promote racial equity in all city policies and decisions.

Central Corridor LRT Walkability. In April I will be participating in a panel discussion of the District Council Collaborative's Green Line Walkability Survey Summary on Monday, **April 8**th. The event begins

at 5 pm and will be held at the Wilder Center, 451 Lexington Parkway North Saint Paul. The program will include a presentation of Walkability Survey Findings, followed by a panel discussion.

Refocusing Special Operations Division (SOD) Police. In March the Police Chief shared a plan to refocus Special Operations Division (SOD) personnel. This group of personnel has had citywide responsibilities since its inception, which made strategic sense at that time as we had a total of approximately 945 sworn officers. Now that we have approximately 830 sworn officers the Chief is convinced that we should focus on our identified hotspot areas to have a greater impact on crime, specifically violent crime. As a result, 30 officers and 3 Sergeants will go back into precincts. This will allow us to form a new Northside Neighborhood Beat in our 3 most violent crime hot spots, but will also have a positive impact in all of the precincts

Feral Cats. I have received a number of comments about a new project I am working on that would allow Trap Neuter Return (TNR) programs to operate in Minneapolis. Allowing TNR programs offers us a potentially effective and affordable way to address the out-of-control growth of the populations of wild cats that spread disease, kill birds and other wildlife, create offensive smells, damage property and disturb residents. In this approach cats are trapped, taken to a vet to be vaccinated and sterilized and then returned to a feral cat colony caretaker. The ordinance changes I am proposing will not take any current tool away from Animal Control staff. They will still have the authority to kill a stray cat after it has been held for the necessary time (5 days), has been checked for Identification to return it to an owner and has been an assessed to determine if it is suitable for adoption. To help get started I have established a working group that includes of city staff, and representatives from Minnesota Spay Neuter Assistance, Audubon Minnesota, the Minneapolis Animal Care and Control Advisory Committee, Minnesota Voters for Animal Protection and the Audubon Chapter of Minneapolis. I believe that Trap Neuter (vaccinate) and Return programs offer a promising, affordable and humane method of reducing feral cat numbers, while also protecting public health and reducing impact on wildlife. For information about the programs in New Jersey that might be a model for ours visit http://www.aplnj.org/projectTNR.php.You can also learn more and watch a short introductory video on the subject here http://www.alleycat.org/page.aspx?pid=730

Kiva Zip. I recently met with some individuals working with a pilot project called Kiva Zip. Kiva Zip is looking for low income, financially excluded, or socially impactful entrepreneurs to whom they can make 0% interest loans of up to \$5,000. The loans are crowd-funded by individuals from around the world via their website, connecting borrowers with dozens of lenders who provide capital, marketing, and support. You can check out their website at www.zip.kiva.org. They are looking to focus on expansion efforts on Minneapolis/St. Paul and the greater Minnesota area in the coming months.

Minneapolis Peacemaker Awards. This spring the City, working with PeaceMaker Minnesota, will be honoring Minneapolis teachers who teach kids nonviolent ways to resolve their problems, or who engage youth in positive activities to steer them away from possible violence and students who make a difference promoting peace and nonviolence in their school. Peace makers will be recognized and awarded \$250-\$1000 prizes donated on behalf of PeaceMaker Minnesota to their school in recognition of their accomplishments. More information about the awards can be found at: http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@health/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-104894.pdf

Minneapolis Homeownership and Banking Fair. The Minnesota Homeownership Center and the City of Minneapolis invite you to the Minneapolis Homeownership and Banking Fair on **Saturday April 27**th, 9am-2pm (Open House), at International Market Square, Studio 185, 275 Market Street. This free event is open to the public and will feature dozens of banks, mortgage lenders, down-payment programs, property developers and local nonprofit housing organizations offering information on Lending, down-payment and other resources for successful homeownership.

West River Parkway Repaving. City crews will begin doing curb and gutter repair and asphalt repaving of West River Parkway this spring, from 4th St S to Franklin Ave E, including the ramps from Franklin to the Parkway. Public Works staff expect this to be a 5 week project, starting as early as this week. They will post advance notice before paving occurs, and have been working closely with Park Board staff to avoid disrupting scheduled events. This project was originally planned for 2012, but the University of

Minnesota asked the City to postpone it to this year, to avoid having both the Parkway and Riverside Avenue under construction simultaneously.

Seward Sustainability Fair. Please join me at the Seward Neighborhood Sustainability Fair on **Saturday, April 13, 12:00 to 4:30pm** at Faith Mennonite Church, 2720 E. 22nd St. The Fair is sponsored by the Faith Mennonite Church community, the Seward Neighborhood Group, and the SNG Environment Committee. Check out the Seward Profile for more details. http://sewardprofile.posterous.com/neighborhood-sustainability-fair-at-faith-men.

34th Ave S Raingarden Bumpout Project. The Mississippi Watershed Management Organization has chosen to fund a \$10,000 planning grant from the Seward Neighborhood Group for a project to install bumpouts on the 2400 block of 34th Ave S in Seward that will capture, store and improve stormwater in the right of way. I'm very excited about this project, and have helped to convene City traffic and storm sewer staff to work on it, in addition to sending a letter of support for this grant request. I view this as a great pilot for tackling storm water runoff and traffic calming at the same time, and I hope it will provide a model that the City will be able to use in many other locations. There will be a community meeting to share plans for this project on Thursday, **April 11th**, at 7pm at Matthews Center.

Forage Wins Award. The Lake Street Council has awarded Forage Modern Workshop at 4023 East Lake Street its "Best Use of Facade Improvement Grant" for the major improvements they worked on with Brownsmith Restoration. Brownsmith installed additional windows and doors to open views to Lake Street and provide access for new businesses in the building. Then, Forage utilized their signage project to add visibility and brighten up what had before been a dreary exterior. Now, with the addition of Parka, the Forage and Brownsmith building is a shining gem of hip design and ingenuity in the Longfellow neighborhood. Congratulations to Forage and Brownsmith!

Funding Request for Boeser Site. The Council's Community Development committee recommended the application to the State Department of Employment and Economic Development for one million dollars in Livable Communities Transit Oriented Development funds for the Boeser site. With these funds, the vacant, blighted commercial building at 2901 4th Street SE, adjacent to the 29th Ave LRT station, will be demolished and redeveloped into 200+ units of transit-oriented, mixed-income housing. At least 20% of the units will be affordable. As part of the Prospect Park Plan to create a walkable artscentered cultural district with a vibrant mix of uses, The City of Minneapolis will rebuild 4th Street SE, which is in need of major reconstruction. "Green Fourth" will be a pilot project for a Green/Living Street that is pedestrian/bicycle focused, integrating connecting elements, stormwater management, and potentially district energy and shared parking to attract people and other investment to the project area.

Funding Request for Surly Brewing. The Council's Community Development committee has recommended the application to Hennepin County for \$500,000 in Transit Oriented Development funds, to clear the proposed site at 5th and Malcolm of structures and abandoned utilities and construct public improvements. Surly plans to develop this large blighted industrial site into a nationally recognized destination brewery in the Prospect Park neighborhood. The site has specifically been selected for its urban location, redevelopment potential, and connections to multiple sources of sustainable public transportation, including nearby light rail, bus routes, and bike trails.

Longfellow Trees. The Longfellow Community Council's Environment and Transportation committee has received a \$2,000 grant from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization to build a neighborhood campaign to get property owners to plant trees – especially trees that will grow to have a large canopy – on private property. This campaign will use the City's Tree Canopy Study to determine which My office was very involved in writing this grant, and is helping to plan the campaign. Longfellow residents

515 on the Park. The City Planning Commission gave its approval to the Fine Associate's housing project on 15th Ave across from Curry Park, but only after it required them to maintain a public pedestrian walkway along old 5th Street from Riverside Plaza to the Brian Coyle Center. The sidewalk issue will come before the Zoning and Planning Committee on March 21 and I plan to support it. The other

approvals, including a Conditional Use Permit and several variances, have been appealed. The appeal will be heard by the Council's Zoning and Planning committee (on which I serve) on April 4th.

West Bank Improvement District. I understand from advocates of the West Bank Improvement District that they have collected more than enough signatures (25% of property owners) to begin the process to form a new self-managed special service district on the West Bank. Once City staff has ensured that these petition signatures are sufficient to start the process, the City will schedule a public hearing on the proposed district. I believe this public hearing will occur on May 14th.

Apply to Serve on a Boards or Commission. There are openings on the Arts Commission, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, and the Minneapolis Telecommunications Network. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov.

Ward Office Hours. Every Tuesday morning I hold "Office Hours" in the Ward from 9:30-11:00am. Please feel free to call for an appointment or just stop by.

1st Tuesdays, Hard Times Café (West Bank/University);

2nd Tuesdays, Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como (SE Como);

3rd Tuesdays, Pratt School (Prospect Park);

4th Tuesdays, the Birchwood Cafe (Seward/Longfellow).

Cam Gordon
Minneapolis City Council Member, Second Ward
673-2202, 296-0579
cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov
http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2